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UNCLAS VATICAN 005404

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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: HOLY SEE NOMINATES NEW VATICAN PERMANENT OBSERVER TO THE U.N.: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON CELESTINO MIGLIORE

REFS: A) VATICAN 4398, B) VATICAN 4388

11. (U) POPE JOHN PAUL II HAS APPOINTED UNDERSECRETARY FOR RELATIONS WITH STATES (DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER) MONSIGNOR UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 VATICA 05404 060634Z  
CELESTINO MIGLIORE TO BE THE HOLY SEE'S PERMANENT OBSERVER AT THE UNITED NATIONS IN NEW YORK. MIGLIORE REPLACES ARCHBISHOP RENATO MARTINO WHO RETURNS TO ROME TO TAKE UP A SENIOR CURIA POSITION. MIGLIORE WILL BE ORDAINED AS AN ARCHBISHOP BEFORE TAKING UP HIS POSTING TO NEW YORK.

12. (U) CELESTINO MIGLIORE WAS BORN IN CUNEO, IN PIEDMONT PROVINCE, IN THE NORTH OF ITALY IN 1950. AFTER HIS ORDINATION AS A CATHOLIC PRIEST HE TOOK UP GRADUATE STUDIES IN CANON LAW AND DIPLOMACY AND ENTERED THE HOLY SEE'S DIPLOMATIC SERVICE IN 1980. MIGLIORE SERVED AT HOLY SEE NUNCIATURES IN ANGOLA, THE U.S., EGYPT, AND POLAND. IN 1992 HE WAS APPOINTED AS THE HOLY SEE'S PERMANENT OBSERVER TO THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE IN STRASBOURG. HE RETURNED TO ROME IN 1995 UPON HIS APPOINTMENT AS UNDERSECRETARY OF THE SECTION FOR RELATIONS WITH STATES (AT THE VATICAN'S SECRETARIAT OF STARE. HE SPEAKS ITALIAN, ENGLISH, FRENCH, SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE.

13. (SBU) MIGLIORE HAS BEEN ONE OF POST'S MOST OPEN, ARTICULATE, AND FRIENDLY INTERLOCUTORS. MORE SO THAN MANY OTHER VATICAN OFFICIALS, HE HAS BEEN WILLING TO ACT TO RESOLVE PROBLEMS OR ADVANCE POLICY, SOMETIMES DEFYING THE HOLY SEE'S TRADITIONAL CAUTION. HE WAS, FOR EXAMPLE, INSTANTLY AND POSITIVELY DISPOSED TO WORKING WITH POST AND OTHER DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS TO ORGANIZE AND HOST AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS WHEN OTHERS IN THE HOLY SEE WERE MORE HESITANT. THIS "CAN DO" ATTITUDE SHOULD STAND HIM WELL IN HIS UPCOMING RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE U.N. THIS IS NOT TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT MIGLIORE THINKS LIKE AN AMERICAN. HE IS ITALIAN, AND UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 VATICA 05404 060634Z  
SEES THE WORLD THROUGH A EUROPEAN FILTER, WHICH HAS LED HIM AT TIMES TO BE CRITICAL OF OR SKEPTICAL TOWARD ASPECTS OF U.S. POLICIES. FOR EXAMPLE, IN AN EARLY OCTOBER 2001 DISCUSSION WITH POLOFF ABOUT THE U.S. RESPONSE TO THE ATTACKS OF SEPTEMBER 11, MIGLIORE POINTEDLY NOTED THAT "AFTER ALL, BIN LADEN IS A U.S. CREATION" (NOTE: REFERRING TO U.S. ASSISTANCE TO ISLAMIC MUJAHADIN IN AFGHANISTAN IN THE 1980'S.) LIKEWISE, IN DISCUSSIONS ABOUT BIOTECH FOODS, HE HAS ASSERTED THE VIEW THAT U.S. POLICY IN ZAMBIA IS DRIVEN BY ECONOMIC, RATHER THAN HUMANITARIAN, INTERESTS.

14. (SBU) MIGLIORE'S VIEWS ON IRAQ AND THE MIDDLE EAST ARE REPORTED IN DETAIL IN REFTELS. MIGLIORE HAS MADE CLEAR THAT HE IS "NO FAN OF IRAQ," BUT DOES NOT YET BELIEVE THE U.S. HAS YET MADE THE CASE FOR PREEMPTIVE MILITARY ACTION.

15. (SBU) MIGLIORE, AS DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER EQUIVALENT AT THE VATICAN, NECESSARILY COVERED A GLOBAL RANGE OF FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. WHETHER BY CHOICE OR CIRCUMSTANCE, IN THE LAST YEAR HE HAS TAKEN A PARTICULAR INTEREST IN A FEW AREAS: THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN NORTH KOREA (HE HAS TRAVELED THERE FIVE TIMES IN RECENT YEARS), THE CHURCH'S POSITION IN RUSSIA WHERE HE RECENTLY TRAVELED TO DISCUSS GOR'S REFUSAL OF VISAS TO CATHOLIC CLERGY, AND THE CHURCH'S DIFFICULT RELATIONS WITH VIETNAM. ALL IN ALL, MIGLIORE CAN BE COUNTED ON TO BE AN OPEN, SOMETIMES UNVARNISHED, BUT ALSO CAREFUL AND DELIBERATE INTERLOCUTOR AT THE U.N. HE CERTAINLY ENJOYS THE CONFIDENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER TAURAN AND THE POPE HIMSELF.

16. (U) ARCHBISHOP-DESIGNATE MIGLIORE WILL STEP INTO THE UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 VATICA 05404 060634Z  
SHOES OF THE ABLE RENATO MARTINO, THE VATICAN'S REPRESENTATIVE AT THE U.N. FOR THE LAST 16 YEARS. IT WAS MARTINO'S LEADERSHIP THAT STEERED THE HOLY SEE DELEGATIONS TO SELF-PROCLAIMED SUCCESS AT U.N. CONFERENCES IN RIO DE JANEIRO IN 1992, CAIRO IN 1994, BEIJING IN 1995 AND THE MORE RECENT 2002 CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA. MARTINO'S 40 YEARS IN THE SERVICE OF VATICAN DIPLOMACY, IN PLACES AS FAR APART AS SINGAPORE AND LEBANON, PROVIDED HIM WITH A UNIQUE PREPARATION FOR HIS TIME AT THE U.N. MARTINO WAS CONSTANTLY IN THE NEWS, BOTH SECULAR AND ECCLESIASTICAL. HE ALSO SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF TIME PROMOTING THE HOLY SEE'S DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES AT THE U.N. DURING VISITS ABROAD. IN FACT, ARCHBISHOP MARTINO'S EFFORTS HAVE TURNED THE PERMANENT OBSERVER POST INTO A KEY VENUE FOR THE HOLY SEE TO PROJECT ITS MESSAGE. MIGLIORE INHERITS THE PRESTIGE, BUT ALSO THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE POST. THE FACT THAT POPE JOHN PAUL CHOSE MIGLIORE TO BE THE HOLY SEE' PERMANENT OBSERVER AT THE U.N. SHOWS THE HOLY SEE WANTS ITS BEST DIPLOMATIC HAND PLAYED AT THIS KEY INTERNATIONAL TABLE.

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2002VATICA05404 - Classification: UNCLASSIFIED